Pulpit Preaching

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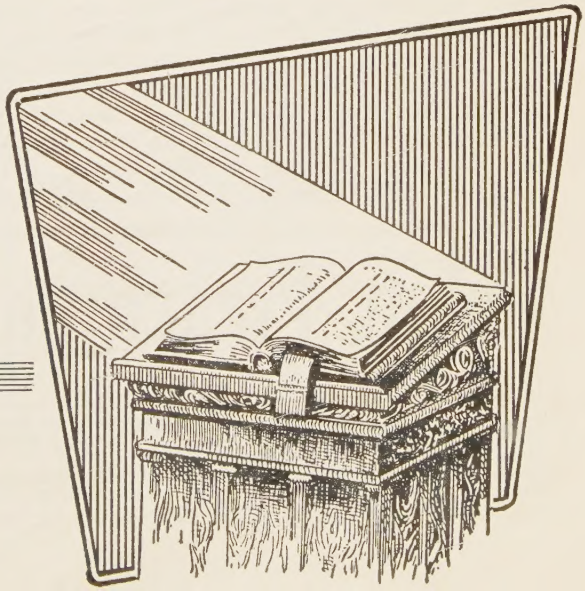

A PROFESSIONAL JOURNAL FOR MINISTERS

Editorial Comments

"Antidote for Anxiety" is this month's initial theme. The second theme, "Thanksgiving Day," includes three sermons for next month's Thanksgiving Sunday and Harvest Home observances.

Next month's themes will be "The Heart of Christmas," sermons for Advent and Christmas, and "Day of Beginnings," sermons for the new year. The December topics will be "Great Words of Faith: Love," the second in our new series, and "Life in Christ"; January themes will be "Psalm 23" and "The Prodigal Son," both of these emphases representing specific requests from readers of PULPIT PREACHING.

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Books For Pulpit Preaching

Christmas in Our Hearts by Charles L. Allen and Charles L. Wallis is an attractive Christmas gift book which contains sixteen devotional essays centered in the Gospel story and the meanings of this story. Typical chapter headings are Christmas Is a Simple Story, The High Road of the Spirit, The Mother God Chose, The Wonder of It All, and Some Never Know He Came. (Revell, 48 pp., $1.)

Christmas Songs and Their Stories by Herbert H. Wernecke is an excellent seasonal volume that includes the texts with variations of 54 Christmas carols and hymns, and the origin and pertinent background details about each. (Westminster, 68 pp.. $2.50.)

Understanding the Old Testament by Bernhard W. Anderson is an absorbing and significant account of the children of Israel. Written for the general reader, the book warrants the consideration of scholar and layman alike. Maps, photographs, charts and diagrams, along with an engaging and vivid prose, make this a most useful and illuminating handbook. Writes the author: "The study of the Bible is an ever-expanding frontier. Thanks to the steady gains made in the fields of historical criticism, archaeology and Biblical theology, today w may understand anew the range and dept of the religious heritage received from Is rael. Indeed, so revolutionary have been th recent insights into the history of Israel' faith that books written just a few year ago are, in many respects, out of date. Th purpose of this book is not so much to forg into new areas as to bring the reader up t the advancing frontier." (Prentice-Hall, 55 pp., $7.95.)

Also initiated by the National Council o Religion in Higher Education is a compan ion volume, *Understanding the New Testa ment* by Howard Clark Kee and Frankli W. Young. This, too, is a scholarly, thoug non-technical, study which concerns th community and world in which Christian ity was conceived and seeks to give an un derstanding of the power that continues t operate through the New Testament dow to our own time. The three main division are "The Community Emerges," "The Com munity Expands" and 'The Community Ma tures." The volume offers a synthesis whic is seldom as successfully achieved. (Pren tice-Hall, 492 pp., $7.95.)

The Ministers Manual continues to in crease in stature and scope, and is by a odds the most useful volume of its charac ter available to pastors. Edited by M. K. W Heicher, the 1958 Edition (33rd in the se ries) has a greater breadth and more stimu lating worship and sermonic resources tha its predecessors. Pastors who may not hav used this series for ten to twelve years wi be surprised by the quality and value of th materials now included. Whether employe as a weekly companion or as an occasiona source for homiletical suggestions, the boo has something to offer every preache (Harper, 322 pp., $3.)

Prayers for Daily Use by Samuel H. Mi ler possesses the qualities found in the cla sical prayer anthologies: a majestic dignit in thought, clarity and color in expressio and a profound interpretation of the Chri tian faith. Here are 263 prayers for mor ing and evening worship and for speci

(Continued on page 19)

Pulpit Preaching

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ANTIDOTE FOR ANXIETY

o You Worry?

J. R. BROKHOFF, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Charlotte, N. C.

Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me.—John 14:1

Do you worry? I do. Who doesn't? Some
ne ago a person was asked in a radio quiz
ogram, (If wrinkles come from worry,
iat animal worries the most? The answer
ven was, "Man." The audience roared, be-
use no one suspected that answer. The
rrect answer was "Elephant." Yet, the MC
ve the person credit for the answer, be-
use he had to admit that man was the
orriest" animal.

Worry seems to be a universal problem.
group of physicians went over their case
tories to learn the most frequent com-
ints of their patients. Seventy percent
ve worry as a complaint. Even youth wor-
. In a survey of 15,000 young people it
s learned that worry was one of the six
ief problems faced by teen-agers. Even
sus worried as he confronted the prospect
dying on the cross. He confessed to his
sciples, "Now is my soul troubled. And
iat shall I say, Father, save me from this
ur."

All of us know that we should not worry.
e are perfectly aware that worry is wrong.
does us no good, but actually harms us.
e problem is to stop worrying. Yet, the
b statements of friends, "Stop worrying.
erything will be all right," are of no
lue. Jesus and his disciples faced the prob-
n of worry at the time of the Last Sup-
r. He told them he was going to leave
em. At once they became alarmed. They
ked "Where are you going? Can we come
th you? Why can't we go where you are
ing? What will happen to us if you go
cause we left all to follow you?" To stop
ir worrying, Jesus said, "Let not your
arts be troubled believe in God, believe
o in me." Here Jesus says that the an-
er to worry is faith in God and in him.
that enough to cure worry, to merely say:
top worrying; have faith." Faith is the
swer to worry, but how is that faith re-
ed specifically to the problem?

I

Jesus would say to us, first, "Let not your hearts be troubled" by having faith to live one day at a time. Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount had taught this principle when he said, "Let the day's own trouble be sufficient for the day." Live today only. When we try to live in yesterday or tomorrow, we begin to worry. Doctors learned in their study of case histories that 50% of their patients' worries dealt with yesterday, 40% with tomorrow, and only 10% with present difficulties. To keep from worry, we must learn to live each day as in water tight compartments. If you have ever sailed in a large ship and went from one end to the other, you will recall that at certain distances you stepped over a partition where there was a door. In the event of a crash or a torpedo, the doors would be shut to keep the water from flowing to other parts of the ship and thus sinking it. The water by use of the water-tight doors was confined to the damaged area and the ship was saved. This is what must be done with our lives. We must shut the door on yesterday and on tomorrow so tightly that the troubles or fears of yesterday and tomorrow cannot leak into today to disturb it.

To avoid worry, then, yesterday's problems and mistakes must be forgotten. Much worrying is due to re-living and re-thinking what happened yesterday. We wish we had not said what we did. We are sorry we made the decision. We would like to live over those days to do differently. This gets us nowhere, because the past is dead and gone. No amount of thinking can change yesterday's mistakes. It is like a certain graduation speaker when he asked whether the students had ever sawed wood. All hands went up. Then he asked them if they ever sawed sawdust. No hand went up. Then he explained that worry was like that. Thinking is sawing wood, and worry is trying to saw sawdust. It cannot be done, because the wood has already been sawed. It is futile and foolish.

It is easy to say, "Forget it and stop

worrying," but it is another thing to forget it. Paul learned how to do it. He said, "Forgetting the things that are behind. I press toward the mark . . . " How does one forget the past? He needs to bring his past mistakes and sins to God. Confess them to Him. Get them out of his system. Then receive the gracious forgiveness of God. When God forgives, He forgets. He wipes it out of His memory as though the sin was never committed. If God forgets our sin, we can well afford to forget ours. When we forget past errors, we are free from worrying over the past.

II

As yesterday must be forgotten, we must let tomorrow take care of itself. Many of our worries deal with what might happen tomorrow. Will there be another war? Will I fail in my job? Will I be adequate for tomorrow's challenge? What if I should lose my job? Suppose I am in a car wreck on the proposed trip? The list may go on to infinity. The fact is that practically all we worry about concerning tomorrow never happens. A business man of Des Moines kept a diary. At the end of each day he wrote in green ink the thing that worried him about tomorrow. One day he decided to check on the 50 most important things he worried about to see if they happened. In 10 years he found that not one of them ever occurred.

To say, "Don't worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself," is easy, but how do we practice it? Here is where faith again comes in. To let tomorrow take care of itself, we must have faith in the providence of God. Think of past years: Has not God been good to us? Has He not helped us through every trouble and sorrow? He has not failed us in the past, and therefore is it not reasonable that he will not fail us in the future? Jesus said, "My grace is sufficient for thee." His grace is sufficient for every need and problem that may arise. It takes faith to believe that, and when we have that faith we have part of the answer to worry. Tomorrow will never concern us because, let the worst come to the worst, we have God who will not permit us to stumble or fall.

One time Will Rogers was asked by an admirer, "If you had only 48 hours to live, what would you do?" He answered, "I'd live them one by one." He learned the secret of not worrying. If we would learn the same, we must live 365 days each year one by one.

III

Jesus continues to say to us, "Let not your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me." Express this belief in accepting the inevitables of life rather than worrying over them. Worry, as we all will admit, comes often from fretting about things we cannot change. For instance, some of us worry about the weather: too much or too little rain, too warm or too cold. A moment's thought convinces us that all the worry in the world will not change the weather one degree. Reinhold Niehbuhr wrote a prayer that has been adopted by Alcoholics Anonymous. This prayer, if used every day and lived, would answer the problem of worry over life's inevitables:

"God, grant me the serenity
To accept the things I cannot change:
The courage to change the things I can
And the wisdom to know the difference."

There is only one thing to do and that is to dismiss from our minds the inevitables of life by accepting them. What is, is. What is done, is done. The milk is spilled. The water is over the dam. So what? What can you do about it? Will worry change it?

This is faced often in daily life. Your dearest one dies. Have you accepted it as a fact, a hard and perhaps cruel fact of life? Of, are you living as though it did not happen, you are living as though the loved one will be coming home one of these days? Have you made the necessary changes in your life and made adjustments? Could it be that you are worrying about the fact that the death occurred and sit in the misery of grief?

You take your loved one to the hospital for what you thought was an innocent operation, but the terrifying news from the surgeon was that the growth was malignant. The bottom of life drops out. The bare fact is that cancer is there. Death is a possibility. No worrying is going to change the facts. Accept the inevitable and make the most of the remaining time you have with your loved one.

As parents you may have dreamed of your daughter going to college and having some day a church wedding. Your High School daughter runs away one night with a boy you do not particularly like and gets married by a Justice of the Peace. There you are with your crushed dreams and hopes. Is worry the thing to do? Would it not be better to accept the marriage as a fact, help them all you can to make it a success, and try to learn to love her husband?

Jesus showed us how to accept the in-

itable in the Garden of Gethsemane. Be- g human, he did not want to die any more an we do. Yet he felt the call of God to e on the cross. He went to the Garden to ght it out with God and so he prayed, "If be possible, let this cup pass from me." ie answer was "No." The cross was a ne- ssity. Christ must die for the sins of man- nd. After Jesus prayed about it three nes in the midst of bloody agony, he ac- pted the inevitability of the cross and alked toward it. He said, "Not my will but ine be done." Not worry but submission God's will was his answer to the inevi- ble of life.

To accept the inevitables of life as the ll of God takes faith in God. We cannot cept the situation without worry unless have the faith to believe that God's will good. At the time the situation may be ry severe and horrible, but we have the ith that in the end God will work out erything for the best. Now it may be a oss, but a crown is coming. We have cour- e to believe that there cannot be a crown thout a cross.

Moreover, faith enables us to believe d's promise that he will never give us ore than we can bear. No temptation will erpower us. God will not permit Satan to t the better of us. Though we pass through e waters, they shall not overwhelm us. ie smoking flax he will not quench. This ves us a sense of victory in life made pos- ble by faith. The situation at present may bad, but we do not worry about the in- itables of life because faith tells us there a way out.

IV

Jesus continues to say, "Let not your arts be troubled; believe in God, believe o in me." To overcome worry, have faith, sus is saying. And faith always is prac- al. To beat down worry, do something out your faith. Worry involves activity, t it is action that gets nowhere. It is like cking in a rocking chair. You have action t stay in the same place. Worry is think- g revolving around a point of fear. It is nking in a cycle. It is like a carrousel: u go round and round and get off the ne place you got on, but you may be zy as a result. Worry takes us around d around our problem until we are diz- and less able to face the situation. Some- w or other we must break through this ious cycle. Thinking must become con- uctive. Action must be toward a goal side our minds.

What are we doing about our worries? Many who worry do nothing about their problems except think about them in terms of anxiety. Are you worried about the future of your children? Do you wonder if they will become delinquents, wether they will become upright citizens and good Christians? Every parent can permit himself to worry about the future of his children. But what are we parents doing about the prevention of the possibility? Instead of worrying, we need to be bringing our children with us to the family pew that these young lives may get inspiration for noble living. Are we seeing that they are getting regularly to church school that they may know the fundamental truths of God? If they are old enough, parents will do well to see that their youth are taking an active part in the youth activities of the congregation where they will form Christian friendships. Having done this, we can let the rest to God.

Are you worried about your future economic security? Do you dread the possibility of spending your last years in a public old folks' home or living on a bare subsistence level provided by public welfare? Instead of worrying, you can do something now to prevent it. Are you now living from hand to mouth, spending your money as fast as you get it, and even spending more money than you earn? If so, you will some day be caught short. Now is the time to stop worrying and get busy: work hard, stop spending on luxuries, be thrifty and save for tomorrow's needs and old age.

Are you worried about the world of tomorrow? Do you dread the prospect of an atomic war? Do you worry about your son's being drafted and blown to pieces in the next few years? If so, what are you doing to prevent it? Worry will not make the situation better, only worse. To prevent another conflict, we must work for peace to retain it. Are we interested in our community's problems? Are we exercising our vote intelligently? Are we concerned enough to see we have adequate schools and better paid teachers? Are we working for better government? One thing is sure: we will not avoid another conflict unless now we build bridges among classes, races, and nations—bridges of love and understanding based on brotherhood. This must be done now to avoid a future conflict. Instead of worrying, let us get busy.

Part of the answer to worry, then, is to do what you can and let God take care of the rest. Here again to do this we must

have faith. After doing what we can, faith is needed to trust in God's ability to care for the outcome. An itinerant ranch hand applied for a job with only this statement: "I can sleep when the wind blows." The prospective employer was not sure about employing him, but being desperate for help, he decided to take him. One night a storm arose. The owner called to his helper, but there was no reply. He decided to check to see if everything was protected from the wind storm. He found the windmill securely tied. The corral gate was adequately lashed. A tarpaulin was placed over the hay stack and staked to the ground. The owner went to the helper's quarters and found him fast asleep. Then he understood his recommendation: "I can sleep when the wind blows." He had done all he could, and now he could sleep in peace. It takes faith for us to do that with our problems. After doing all we can we turn it over to God, and we relax and rest instead of worrying.

This implies a partnership with God. We do our part, and God does His. A widow once had six children and adopted twelve more. She did such a fine job of raising supporting, and training them that she won public recognition. A newspaper reporter asked her how she ever did it and not worry about it. She replied, "I entered into a partnership." "A partnership?" queried the reporter. "Yes," returned the widow "some years ago I entered a partnership with God I made a deal with Him. I said I would do the work if He would do the worrying. And ever since I have not had one hour of worry." That is the kind of partnership every worrier must enter if he is to overcome his worry.

Psychologists tell us that the tap root of worry is fear. The Bible says that the only antidote to fear is faith. Therefore, as faith increases in a man, worry decreases. That is why Jesus' words are the perfect prescription for the abolition of worry: "Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God believe also in me."

The Healing of Our Tensions

AARON MECKEL, First Congregational Church, St. Petersburg, Florida

Did you ever have a little boy ask you to untie his shoestrings when they got all snarled up? It's an interesting experience, to say the least. If you will let patience have its way, you will finally get the little fellow's shoe laces unsnarled. It's a good lesson in patience and perseverance.

After one such little chap came to me the other day, it set me thinking of human beings and their problems, especially this problem of tension, which is taking such a terrific toll in modern life. Look at the list of our afflictions — high blood pressure, hearts prematurely played out, ruffled and irritable tempers "I'm so highstrung and irritable, both at home and at my place of business," said a young executive to his pastor recently. "At times I am almost ashamed of myself." Dwight Moody used to say that he had more trouble with a man named Moody than with anyone else!

I

Now, over in the 37th Psalm there is a man who has a wonderful secret to share with us. Suppose you sit down and carefully read this great Psalm as a kind of spiritual exercise. Here is a man, very much like ourselves, all in a dither about world conditions, and what he calls the "evil doer." And then, when he is at the breaking point, God takes him by the hand and speaks to him. "Don't be so fretful about the evil doer and the working of iniquity. His days are numbered." See, instead, what he is to do He is to "trust in the Lord,'" to "delight himself in the Lord," to "commit his way unto the Lord." Above all, he is to "rest in the Lord' and wait patiently for Him. If only we could learn to do that! Then God would unfold our lives in harmony with His plan for us, and tension would fold its tent like the Arabs, and silently steal away!

Not, to be sure, that we are to engage in a kind of escapism. Gods invitation to us is not to engage in stagnation, but to make that full and complete commitment of ourselves to Him that will bring us inner soul rest. In Him we may find a calm center from which to live. As another has put it,

"The calm beauty of an ordered life,
Whose every breathing is unworded praise."

And now — as with the little boy and the snarled shoestrings — let us try and find a few places to get hold of in our quest for inner serenity.

We begin at the center: Nothing can so effectively remove the tensions that bother us as a first hand experience of the renewing, cleansing grace of God. Nothing can so take the "kinks" out of us as a fresh ex

rience of God's forgiveness, in which we alistically face ourselves, and get right th God and man. And sometimes I think at good, respectable people, the like of rselves, need it the most.

Recently I noticed the calm, serene face an elderly saint at a funeral service I as conducting. Like the sun piercing the ouds on a dark day, was the face of this rson. And as in the great words of St. aul in I Cor. 15, it was evident that she ew their meaning first hand.

By way of contrast, here was a man who as sent by a psychiatrist to a minister of ligion. Upon his arrival he said that he lt "all picked to pieces," and very much shed around. He knew so much about him-lf and yet so little He was inwardly un-ppy, divided, restless. And then, lovingly d understandingly, that minister guided m into an old-fashioned experience of con-rsation. The transition from self to God, the center of his life, was made. Grad-lly he let go of his inner tensions and rned to "rest in the Lord," that is, he sted in *that* which God had mercifully ovided, in Jesus Christ, for his salvation. took life abundant and eternal as a gift om the outstretched, pierced hand of rist. The false props came down. For the st time the house of his life rested on m foundations. Christ became his all in . He found peace through forgiveness.

So may we all, my friends. There is an iental saying to this effect: "O God, heal at the center, and then let life come on." iend, dare to discover your true self in rist! Let Him fill you to the full with s redeeming grace. Accept His gift of vation, and false fears will depart. Ten-ns will leave, and you will find a new ace filling your heart.

II

Closely allied with this first bit of coun- is this further word: Ask God to fill u with unfeigned love and good will for ur fellowmen, and irritableness will stop ng you into knots. I'm speaking of some-ng very real, of a basic good will which y Christ can release in our hearts. Per-os it's the horizontal relationship which out of gear in your life.

Not long ago I had occasion to talk with man whose heart was cankered with ha-d and resentment. He felt that he had n shamefully used in a former business ationship. When he was warned that he nself would foot the bill in terms of in-neurosis and anxiety if he persisted in his attitude, he readily agreed. And yet, he went his way unheeding, perhaps to end up an ulcer patient in some hospital. It has been said that the ulcer is the wound-stripe of our generation. Indeed, ulcers are the result, not of what we eat, but of what is eating us!

In the long run the Gospel, with its teaching of mutual forgiveness and good will, is the only workable "psychology." And the Christ, at the center of that Gospel, is still the wisest Physician of the human mind and body who ever walked this earth. "If there is a point of difference between you and your neighbor," so He says, "then settle it. Get it over with. Don't let it fester into resentment and ill will." If we are at the Church altar with a gift, and there comes to our memory an unhappy relationship with our brother, then we must first go and settle it, and then come and make our offering. How utterly sane and sensible such teachings! "Let not the sun go down on your wrath" — such is the immemorial counsel of redemptive religion. If you do, you will take it to bed with you and spend a sleepless night, and ultimately pay the bill in sickness of mind and body. Just plain common sense teaching, itn't it?

Christion love and good will flood the inner being with the glow of spiritual life, health, and strength. Resentments tie us into knots and kinks, and poison the whole life of their unfortunate victim.

Robert J. McCracken confesses that he had to learn the art of living in New York. The constant crowds, with all their pushing and shoving, especially in the late afternoon, wearied him when first he came to the Big City. To be a strap-hanger on the subway, and to smell the breath of persons of many another nationality than his own, bothered him. He found himself seeking the counsel of another who had been living there for sometime. This wise pastor admitted that he had faced the same problem. How to love "all sorts and conditions of men" in a polyglot environment, ah, that was it! And the solution to the problem came when a genuinely Christian attitude was adopted. Said his friend, "I found myself praying for others, yes, for these thousands of human beings, most of them with the same sorrows and troubles that I had. I found myself loving them in the greater love of God." Then the weariness left. Redemptive love alone can win a victory like that. What is more, it can, and will do it, for us all.

It has truly been said that there is only one thing to do with human beings, and

that is to love them. And love, when it flows from a warm, Christian heart, relieves the high tension of daily living, and fills the heart with a new sense of peace and joy and strength. Only those who love really *live.*

III

And then, we need to get more of the hint of the eternal into our day-by-day living, and to do all this for the glory of God! There's nothing like it to take the weariness and strain and fatigue out of living. It is said that Raphael once wrote one significant word over the work of one of his students: "*Amplus!* Larger!" To pause occasionally during the day, and to say, "I am doing this, however humble the task, in order that God's name may be glorified," produces a spiritual tonic that keeps a spring in the step. It will help put your shoulders back! And what is more, it challenges one so to live that his endeavors may be worthy of God's blessing. Alas, there are some people who wear themselves out over a lot of little nothings! They need to get their lives back on the Kingdom pattern, and make them count for something worthwhile.

Bishop Fiske used to tell of the old Maine guide he and a few of his friends employed during their time of vacation. It was the summer when William Jennings Bryan was making his last attempt at the Presidency and rock-ribbed Republican Maine was worried. At night they would sit about the campfire talking things over. One of them was a geologist and spoke of the ages of rocks. Another, a research physician, spoke of the long, long evolution of life on the planet. Yet another, an astronomer, mentioned the immeasurable distances of the stars. During all of this, the old guide sat by, his eyes filled with wonder.

Soon he began to ask questions. Were the rocks really so old? Were the stars so far away? Was the evolution of life actually so long out of the past? When at last he got it in his mind he heaved a sigh of relief. "I guess," he said, "it won't make a powerful lot of difference even if William Jennings Bryan is elected president!"

When the pressure of life threatens to be too much for you, get a new experience of God's cleansing and redeeming love in your heart. Let the Almighty "strike His glory" through your day. And then you will come to know the meaning of these words: "Rest in the Lord, commit thy way unto the Lord, trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass."

Now, Stop Your Worrying!

EVERETT W. PALMER, the First Methodist Church, Glendale, California

Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Let the day's own trouble be sufficient for the day.—Matthew 6:34.

We summon a culprit for sentence. His crimes are known to all.

He is a thief and destroyer of man's best.

He slips behind defenses and burns precious reserves of energy. He makes men old and exhausted before their time.

He hides within the heart and sabotages happiness. He steals away the loveliness of a woman's face.

He abuses and tortures human beings, afflicting them with illness of body and mind, scourging them with worst torment. He harries many to early graves.

He is an enemy of God and man. Heaven and earth bear witness against him.

His name is worry.

What can we do with him? Often to some distraught friend we have said soothingly, "Now stop your worrying." On occasion other people have given us the same advice. But always there is a disturbing voice off stage. "Physician," it taunts, "heal thyself." It is one thing to tell another person not to worry. It is quite another matter to master our own tendency to worry.

Together let us review certain long-tested and proven procedures for bringing worry to heel.

I

First, come to grips with worry.

Make your worry stand inspection. Don't attempt to push it out of sight. Don't try to run from it. Bring it out of that misty swampland of the mind where it lurks, a ghoulish apparition consorting with nameless dread and fears without a face. Isolate it. Strip every clinging association from it. Now make it stand scrutiny in the light of rational thought. Probe it. Dissect it.

This of itself has a cleansing, hygienic effect. It makes a difference like that between walking alone down a country lane at midnight through a frightening woods and traveling the same road by daylight in the company of friends.

To come to grips with worry, make it

nd inspection. Then, knowing the worst, cept it. Come to terms with it. Make ace with life on that basis.

Do we worry that we may not get the omotion we have been hoping for? Very ll, what if we don't? We still have alth, strength, and some skills. Other peo- have lost their job and managed to sur- ve, even benefit from it. Most probably will, too. Do we worry that we may lose r money? Very well, what if we do? We all find that we have much company, many them people who manage to enjoy life mensely. Furthermore, our wife and chil- en will still love us. We will keep every end worth calling friend. Do we worry at we may become the victim of some ppling disease? Very well, what if we ? Other people have suffered the same d have made of it a school for the soul, means for winning heaven's treasure. hatever may be the worst, see that in d's grace we, as others, shall be able to ke the best of it.

"When we have looked steadily at the rst that could possibly happen," says Les- D. Weatherhead, "then what is likely to ppen often seems quite mild." "True peace mind," says the Chinese philosopher, Lin tang, "comes from accepting the worst." Come to grips with worry, make it stand spection and accept the worst.

Now decide what can be done and begin ing it. Do we fear we have heart trou- ? Then we should do something sensible out it, namely go to a doctor. Should he nfirm our fears then we should do some- ng sensible about that, namely change r habits of life to conform to his counsel. ose who deal with the worry about heart uble in like manner often live long and eful lives and attend the funerals of most their friends and relatives. Those who not, often find that nature accommodates m. Though their heart may have been as nd as a dollar when first they began to rry about it, they worry themselves into heart ailment and frequently into a one- y trip to the cemetery.

Worry by nature is an activity of the mind related to rational action. It is like racing motor while the car stands still. Once decide upon a proper course of action d begin to act upon it, what relief comes. e destructive energy of worry is trans- med into power for progress. We move m the place of fear and frustration into land of hope and joy.

Come to grips with worry. Make it stand pection. Accept the worst. Decide what uld be done and begin doing it.

II

Second, to bring worry under control, live one day at a time. "Do not be anxious about tomorrow," taught Jesus, "for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Let the day's own trouble be sufficient for the day."

Jesus knew what we need to learn. He knew the human body and spirit is equipped to live but one day at a time. We can bear one day's burdens, conquer one day's temptations, meet one day's troubles, carry one day's sorrows. By the Grace of God we can be sufficient for whatever one day can bring.

But when we allow ourselves to worry, see what we do. We pile upon ourselves the burden of many days. We put upon ourselves burdens of past mistakes and failures, burdens of past shame, fear and remorse. Then we add the burdens of anticipated troubles, sorrows, pain, and defeat in days ahead. We crush ourselves under burdens no human being can carry.

If we insist upon carrying such a load, we shall break down under it like an overburdened machine. Our poor body and brain will take the overload just so long and then — something will give way. One of the "worry" diseases will overtake us: high blood pressure, heart trouble, diabetes, arthritis, ulcers — to name but a few on the list. Or we may have a "nervous breakdown." Perhaps we may suffer a complete mental break and spend our days cutting paper dolls. At best, we shall limp and drag along.

I like to remember what Robert Louis Stevenson, who learned wisdom in the school of pain, once wrote: "Anyone can carry his burden, however heavy, until nightfall. Anyone can do his work, however hard, for one day. Anyone can live sweetly, patiently, lovingly, purely, till the sun goes down. And this is all that life really means."

Have you ever marveled at the amazing vitality and wholesome optimism of that veteran newscaster and founder of Cinerama, Lowell Thomas? It comes chiefly, of course, from the influence of a saintly mother and noble father, both of whom were once members of a church I served. Derived from the influence of that Christian home is a motto Lowell Thomas lives by, a verse from the Bible. He has it where his eye meets it every day he begins work. It reads: "This is the day which the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it."

To master worry, come to grips with it and learn thus to live one day at a time.

III

Third, to master worry, give your mind

and hands to do for others. Most worry grows from excessive self-concern. Even when our worries rise from anxiety about other people, usually at bottom they can be traced to fear about what will happen to us if thus and so happens to them.

Somewhere I recall a writer telling of a woman named Edith. "She was a little country," he said, "bounded on the north and south by Edith; also bounded on the east and west by Edith. She was surrounded, hermetically sealed by Edith." What else was told of Edith has faded from memory. But of this, however, I can be certain, in that little country of self, Edith was not sovereign. She was the cringing subject of a tyrant named Worry.

"The secret of being miserable," once observed George Bernard Shaw, "is to have the leisure to bother about whether you are happy or not."

Weatherhead tells of a Christian doctor who started a prayer circle among his patients, encouraging each to pray for others, especially those in worse condition. He says he noticed an amazing improvement where it was not expected. When under the requirement of prayer his patients turned their thoughts away from their own ailments to think in love and hope about someone else, lo, they began to feel better themselves. He reports, for instance, "I noticed that when a woman with headache, giddiness and a dry throat is asked to pray for a man with cancer, she at once feels better herself."

To bring worry under control, come to grips with it, learn to live one day at a time, and give your mind and hands more to do for others.

I V

Fourth, to conquer worry, trust in God. This, above all, is the admonition of our Lord.

"If God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O men of little faith? Therefore, do not be anxious, saying 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the Gentiles seek all these things; and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well."

That great Catholic preacher, Bishop Sheen, has said, "Worry is practical atheism. It is want of trust in God." Someone has told of a bulletin board on a neighboring church which says provocatively, "Why pray, you can worry."

Trust in God like that taught in the Sermon on the Mount is the sovereign remedy for worry.

Therein we find assurance in resources adequate for every need. Worry rises from the feeling of being trapped in situations beyond our range of competence. No situation is beyond God's range of competence. Whatever awaits us at any turn of the road, God will be there; and one with God is a majority. Several years ago a good friend gave me a quotation which I have kept on my desk ever since. It reads: "Peace of mind is the conscious possession of adequate resources." That is a gift of trust in God.

A little child on a long journey with his parents must spend the night in a strange and frightening place. A flood has swept away bridges and blocked the roads. Stranded travelers, many tense and irritable, are crowded into small quarters. There is much noise and excitement. Ominous rumors circulate. The little lad is tired and overwrought. He does not understand and is beleaguered by nameless fears. In the confusion he loses sight of his parents and for a time is isolated from them. He crouches silently against the wall, manfully trying to shield his terror, yet with great sobs shaking his little body. So his father finds him.

Having secured some blankets the father makes a comfortable place in a corner and tells the little fellow that everything will be all right. So, without a word he lies down, at his father's request. He lies there quietly, his eyes upon his father's face. There he sees what he knows he can trust. Gradually the great sobs cease to wrench his little frame. At last he slips off into quiet sleep, holding fast to his father's hand.

Each of us is on a long journey. Sometimes we too must spend the night in a strange and frightening place. A sudden storm sweeps away bridges and blocks all the roads, and there we are! But always there is a Father who will find us, gather us into His care, tell us that everything is going to be all right.

To conquer worry, come to grips with it, learn to live one day at a time, give your mind and hands more to do for others, and — trust in God!

Now in these closing moments may we do exactly what we have been thinking about. Let us do some trusting in God. We do not need to search for Him. He is here. We do not need to plead with Him for any gift of mercy, wisdom and peace. He is more ready to give than we are to receive. We have only to affirm this confidence, accept in faith. If we will but look into the face of Jesus we

ll know we can trust God, trust Him to e uttermost.

Let us trust Him enough to sweep every abby fear and lurking anxiety from our nds and turn them over to Him. Is there ything in the past, some bitter memory, nich troubles us? Let us trust Him enough take what is past and put that into His nds. Is there anything in the future that ghtens us? Let us trust God enough to ke the future and put that in His hands. Does he have everything that is troubling us?

Then let us trust Him enough to believe that He loves and forgives us, that He can sustain and keep us.

Even now we feel His peace and strength coming in upon us, entering upon us like gentle spring rain falling upon thirsty grass, like sunrise lifting away the night, like the very air we now breathe.

Cure for Care

By JOHN BISHOP

Care is so common a thing that sooner or er it begins to furrow every face. We are ant to care about many things and to e intensely. A man who does not do his ly work with care becomes lazy and dis-nest. We must care about details or else our es will be disordered. Mothers are nat-lly anxious about their children. Care is e of God's chief disciplines for fashion- the character of man.

Yet this praiseworthy thing may grow to a disease. Jesus, who knew what was in n, warned us not to be overly anxious. ake no anxious thought for the morrow." knew that the cares of this world may sily choke the Word. The disease of care that we forget God's care of us. Because one else seems to care, we grow anxious out the future of our loved ones or about ne good cause in which we are greatly con-ned. If we do not care, who will? Living such a world as this, how can we help ng anxious?

God gave you a sensitive heart, but He o has a heart that cares. So Peter writes, ast all your anxious care upon Him, for cares—not anxiously—for you," as Mof-t translates it, "Let all your anxieties l on Him, for His interest is in you" Peter 5:7).

'An anxious heart," someone has said, never a holy heart." Why go on stag-ring beneath our load of troubles when by side there is God, who daily beareth burdens? So few of us behave as if we lly believe in God. We worry over trifles d so lay waste our powers that when the l crisis comes we are quite unequal to We admit that it is foolish to worry; it ders in many ways, and yet we go on rrying. What is the remedy? It does lit-good to say, "Don't worry, it may never pen." An old proverb, "Never trouble uble till trouble troubles you," is sound vice we all need, but it does not go far enough. When real anxiety comes upon us, we need something firmer than that upon which to stay our souls.

Here is the soundest and sanest prescription I know against anxiety: "In nothing be anxious, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God" (Phil. 4:6). Worry about nothing, pray about everything, and be thankful for anything. "In nothing be anxious," by itself, is as the well-meant but futile as, "Don't worry."

We all like to talk about our troubles and anxieties. Paul tells us to take the matter to God and go through the whole experience again with Him. The alternative to anxiety, the cure for care, is prayer. We are not to forget any of the things that disturb and frighten us; we are to pray about every one of them. "Let your requests be made known unto God." To tell Him is enough. His love will understand. His heart needs no persuading.

The advice of the Apostle Paul is the counsel of the whole Bible. Text after text seems to say, "Don't worry." If you make a list of all the Scripture passages which tell us not to worry, you will find that God permeates them all. "Cast thy burden upon the Lord and He shall sustain thee" (Ps. 55:22). "Commit thy way unto the Lord: trust also in Him and He shall bring it to pass (Ps. 37:5). "Seek ye first His kingdom and His rfighteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).

Put everything into God's hands. The way to be anxious about nothing is to be prayerful about everything. "The heart is never empty," said Alexander Maclaren. "If it is not full of God, it will be full of the world and of worldly care." Paul did not know what a day or night might bring forth. He was a prisoner when he wrote these words. But he had the secret of true peace. It was found in the knowledge that the Lord

is always on hand to comfort and to bless. The only way to take anxious care out of our hearts and lives is to bring God into them and keep Him there.

"In every thing." If a thing is great enough to make me anxious, it is great enough to be spoken about to God. If He is my Friend, then the instinct of friendship will make me tell Him everything. If we are not to get help from God by telling Him of the little things, there will not be much to speak to Him about, for life is made up of innumerable trifles.

If I have an anxiety of which I am ashamed to speak to God, that is a sign that I ought not to have it. There are so many anxieties that oppress us that if we could just once put them into words, we should discover that we have fancied them to be a great deal larger than they actually are. Put your anxieties into definite speech to God, and very few of them will survive.

In the story of King Hezekiah we read of a disturbing and threatening letter which greatly upset him. How did he meet his trouble? He went into the house of the Lord and spread the letter before his God and in prayer found relief from anxiety (2 Kings 19:14). In St. Matthew's Gospel is the story of the beheading of John the Baptist, a tragic blow to the faith of his disciples. What did they do? They went and told Jesus. Telling Jesus was the simplest and wisest way to escape from the burden of anxious fear.

O what peace we often forfeit
O what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
Everything to God in prayer.

III

Worry about nothing, pray about everything, and be thankful for anything. When Paul was in prison at Phillipi, his feet were fast in the stocks and his back ached from the rod; but he and Silas prayed and sang praises to God at midnight. Perhaps it was the memory of that night which moved him to say, "By prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

All the saints agree with him. There was a brave servant of Christ called Allan Gardiner, a missionary to Patagonia, whose life is a record of terrible sufferings and hardships. He was found at last dead on the shore by an upturned boat. And there, where it had fallen from his hands, was his diary, which told of his hunger and thirst, his wounds and loneliness. But the last sentence, added in pencil, was this: "I am overwhelmed with a sense of the goodness of God." Everything was lost—home, love, human friendship, and now life itself—and yet, on the very edge of the last silence, he could say that he was overwhelmed with the goodness of God! And will we say we have nothing to be thankful for? Have we no cause for praise?

To give thanks creates an atmosphere in which anxiety cannot live. It recalls to us prayers that have been answered, needs that have been supplied, fears that have proved groundless. In times of stress and strain wrote Paul, when your back is to the wall recall everything good and pure and worthy of praise. "Count your blessings; name them one by one; and it will surprise you what the Lord hath done."

IV

Cast all your anxious care upon God, for He cares for you. That does not mean we are not required to take care of ourselves. God's care for us is a profound relief, but it is never meant to relieve us of all effort. We are not just to commit everything to God and then fold our hands. The only care-free life is the life that is full of care—care for God, care for our fellows, care for ideals. Anxiety is not an evil; it is a schoolmaster to lead us to God.

The cure for care is to worry about nothing, to pray about everything, and to be thankful for anything that God allows to come into our life. Then, in place of anxiety will come a great peace. "The peace of God which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus." The word "guard" suggests a sentinel who challenges all comers and keeps out every foe. Even so, when we are living the life of prayer, the peace of God will stand sentinel at the gate of our soul, guarding heart and mind.

If we learn to turn everything that might be a ground for anxiety into an opportunity for prayer, we shall find that the promise is true: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee" (Isa. 26:3).

Cast thou thy care upon thy God
The care that loads thy heart;
Take Him this moment at His word,
And let Him do his part.

Thy need is deep, thy care is great
Thy burden hard to bear:
Roll it on Him with all its weight,
And leave it resting there.

reedom from Worry

NENIEN C. McPHERSON, JR., Grace Methodist Church, Dayton, Ohio

There is an old adage which says: "If we n't worry, we'll go to the poorhouse; if do worry, we'll go to the insane asylum." ie paradox is resolved only if we see that are using "worry" with two different eanings.

In the first sense, we are thinking of wor- as normal and useful anticipation, a ocess by which we work ourselves out of noying situations into satisfying ones. orry or anxiety in this meaning of the rd is the earmark of civilization. Progress nes because of man's ability through his agination to face the future, to see what ght befall him and to see what he can with the possibilities that are open to m. If this is what we mean by worry we ght to encourage people to learn *How to rry Successfully,* as the title of David aburn's book exhorts us to do. We should ve an intelligent concern for the future at is the very opposite of indifference, in- ia and weak resignation to things as they .

There is another meaning to "worry." It in this second sense that the old adage rns us of the danger to our mental health. orry easily becomes abnormal. Constant xiety saps our energy. A troubled imag- tion distorts our world. Fear, which is companion of worry, can lead to panic d paralyze action—not because of exter- forces but because of the turmoil within

Dr. Mayo reminds us: "We have doubled number of insane in thirty years. In- ity is a curious result of civilization. ere are few insane among primitive races. e moment a man begins to worry he im- ils his mind."

Worry originally meant "to strangle or choke." Have we not all had that expe- nce? In a state of uneasiness we felt al- st as if we were going to choke. The ocesses of the mind were strangled and could not think clearly. The present-day anings are closely akin to the original ar ng: to worry means "to fret, to chafe, nxious or fretful, to feel great care ety." Someone has described worry mental tornado revolving around a f fear." It acts with the characteris- physical tornado. Such worry is ab- and destructive. It is the foolish bor- ng of trouble.

I

In *Yankee from Olympus,* a biography of Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Catherine Bowen tells of an incident late in the life of that grand old man of the Supreme Court. One day he looked for a book which wasn't there and "cussed out" everybody in sight—including his secretary and his wife. Mrs. Holmes in her characteristic way said nothing, but looked at him in that sharp fashion which she used on such occasions. The Justice went on to the Court. When he returned, the book was in its place on the shelf, above it a small United States flag, and underneath a little sign, neatly printed in Mrs. Holmes' script:

> "I am a very old man. I have had many troubles, most of which never happened."

There is a great deal in that for us. We have many troubles. Most of them have never happened and never will. But they are very real to us. To tell us that worry may come from our imagination does not in any sense lessen the reality of the fact that we are uneasy and fretful.

Thus Jesus' admonition is for us: "Do not be anxious." Do not worry. That does not mean to be indifferent to what is going to happen to us. It does not mean a lack of healthy concern for the future. Rather Jesus is saying: Do not be anxious about the things that do not matter much after all, but seek the meaning of life. Life is more than food and the body than clothing. Away then with fear and anxiety. If we can discover the things that matter most, if we can develop a vital faith in God, all of the things that belong to the fringe of life will find their proper place and significance.

Bishop William Quayle was awake one night and out of bed for several hours in fruitless worry about the problems of the coming day. In the stillness of his own heart he heard God say: "Quayle, you go back to bed; I'll sit up the rest of the night."

Some business man was worrying himself sick during World War II discovered the value of that technique: Each night as he prepared for bed, he knelt and prayed: "God, I've taken care of it the best I could all day; you take the night shift."

II

The strange thing is that we seem to brace up under hardships and to accept with courageous resignation the accomplished fact,

however dire. It is the vague possibility of future tragedies and difficulties that is the seat of most of our worries.

While we were in the depths of the economic depression that began in 1929, Dr. Elwood Worcester, who for more than twenty-five years was the minister of Immanuel Church in Boston, published a book entitled *Making Life Better*. In it he describes two groups of people with whom he had counseled: There were those individuals for whom the depression had not yet brought many difficulties. They still had their jobs. They still had their property. They still had a reasonable income. And yet these people were worried to death, afraid of the future, not knowing what day or hour calamity would descend upon them. But there was another group who had already lost their jobs or had seen their savings wiped out by the drop in values in the stock market. These individuals had a different approach to life. About them, he says:

> "What has impressed me most in persons who have already suffered the loss of all things has been their cheerfulness, their courage, the clear objectivity of their thoughts. In the face of these overwhelming disasters they have learned to draw upon those deeper strata of energy and faith which in time of great need befriend and sustain us."

That experience of Dr. Worcester points the way to freedom from worry. It is not enough to say to us, "Do not be anxious. Do not worry." Freedom from anxiety and worry is what we desire, but how can we achieve it? What is the way out? How can we live in the midst of things as they are and not be anxious?

III

First of all, we must analyze our troubles to discover what is the subject of our worrying. Sometimes we are only vaguely uneasy and unhappy. We would be hard-pressed to answer the question: "About what am I worrying? Oftentimes we will discover we are not worrying about anything in particular. In such cases, just to ask ourselves the question is to free ourselves from worry.

A doctor visited a mental hospital out in the West. He saw a person who looked very gloomy, as if despondency had settled down upon him for life. The doctor thought to lift his spirits. He chatted with the poor fellow in a cheerful spirit for a few minutes. The man seemed to be responding, then he looked at the doctor and said, "Now, I tell you, doc, I'm getting behind on my worrying and if you don't mind, I'll just go back to it." Some of the rest of us may not know what is wor rying us, but we seem to be afraid we wil get behind on our worrying if we analyz our mood too carefully.

Some people find it helpful to put thei troubles down on paper. There is therapeuti value in the use of a pencil. Take a piec of paper and a pencil the next time you be gin to worry and try to answer these ques tions: "What am I worrying about? Is thi really my problem? Is it as serious as i now seems to me? How will it look a yea from now? Will this thing still be my prob lem? Is it something that has already hap pened?"

If the thing we are worrying abou has already happened then we should ac accordingly. It is water over the dam an under the bridge and away. We cannot cap ture it and bring it back up the stream o experience; therefore, we should not mul over what has already happened. We can d nothing about it now. "Forget yesterday it's already gone. Don't dread tomorrow; i isn't here yet."

There is a sense in which one should tak a long view of life and get perspective. There is also a great deal to be said for learning to live a day at a time. If we begin to live hour by hour and day by day and call upon God for sufficient strength and guidance fo the day at hand, we will find that many o our worries will disappear. Too often we concentrate on tomorrow or the day after tomorrow and the problems it may bring we wonder if we will be sufficient for the troubles of the future and our minds are thus filled with anxious care.

IV

If it is a future difficulty or danger, we ought to ask ourselves questions like these "Can I avoid it? If I can't avoid it, what can I do to prepare myself mentally and spiritually to face it? Is it one of those in evitables of life? How can I adjust to it What can I do to prepare myself mentally and spiritually to face this problem and no to run away from it?" It is never wise t run away; we never solve our problems by evading them. If we run away we take our problems and our worries with us, because we continue to live with ourselves. We can't get ourselves off our hands. We can get rid of a lot of people. We can change our resi dence and deliver ourselves from our neigh bors. We can move to another part of the country and free ourselves of some of the things that trouble us. But we'll probably pick up some new difficulties. Wherever we go we will have our fears and our worries We will take our cares with us unless w

ve learned to face life courageously and ve found the inner resources that come th faith in God.

V

Grief is a natural reaction when one has t a loved one or friend, but continued ief is a form of worry. There is no bet- recipe for deliverance from grief than at given by William James. "When you ve a grief, do something worthwhile that u probably would not otherwise have ne." That is exactly what John Bright, e great English social reformer of the neteenth century, did. He had a great sor- w. His lovely wife, whom he adored and th whom he had only lived a few short ars, died. Mr. Bright was still suffering om grief and despair when his friend, chard Cobden, came to sympathize with n. While giving consolation and advice, he id: "There are thousands and thousands homes in England at this moment where ves and mothers and children are dying hunger. Now when the first paroxysm grief is passed, I would advise you to come th me, and we will not rest until the Corn ws have been repealed."

John Bright could not make up for the ss of his wife. But he could find relief from s grief and learn to live without anxiety d despair. He gave himself to the service those in England who were unable to lp themselves, assisting in repealing the rn Laws that were contributing to their nger and distress.

VI

Worry is contagious! If one of us starts rrying usually it is not long before there e two people who are anxious and then ore and more. Wherever an anxious person es he spreads the contagion of his worry d fear, his lack of inner resources and ace of mind. We should never spread fear d anxiety, therefore, by talking to every- dy we see about our troubles. We would far wiser to find one or two sympathetic iends who will listen and keep our confi- nces. If there is not a friend to whom we n talk, we should find a professional coun- lor, perhaps our minister or someone else understanding and experience. Open up to find relief from our worries. He must be sympathetic and reliable and trustworthy. Above all else, he must be willing to keep silent and let us talk.

Dr. Riggs, one of our American psychia- easy to be a good listener, but such a one is just what we need many times in order our hearts to such a counselor and very often we talk our burdens away. It is not trists, has produced "Ten Commandments" for avoiding a nervous breakdown. He has one "Commandment" that points the way to freedom from worry: "To avoid worry, consider whether the problem in hand is your business. If it is not, turn to something else. If it is your business, decide what is best done about it. If you know, get busy. If you don't know, find our promptly. Do these things; then rest your case on the determination that no matter how hard things turn out to be, you will make the best of them—and more than that no man can do."

VII

There is sound common sense in that. And when we get down to the essence of religion, it is sound common sense also. Jesus knew what he was talking about when he admonished his followers not to be anxious about what they were to wear or what they were to eat. Discover what things are of basic importance. Center your attention upon them. Change the disagreeable things that can be changed; adjust to those that cannot.

Christianity goes beyond psychology in delivering us from fear and anxiety. Christianity comes to us as a call. It is a call to enlist, to commit ourselves, to lose our lives in a cause great enough to bring meaning to our lives. The Gospel of Christ offers freedom from worry because Christ bids us forget ourselves and give our highest loyalty to God. And when a man begins to trust God in every area of life, he will discover release from its petty anxieties; the vague, brooding sense of worry will be pushed out by an all-consuming passion for the things that abide. Though he will not be rid of his troubles, he will discover the strength to face them and will know that he does not live and labor alone.

Worth Quoting

E. PAUL HOVEY, The Federated Churches, Lewiston, Idaho

No man is living his true life if he is not living as a real person, in personal communion with other persons, and above all in that basic personal relationship with God which we call religion.

Now if that is what "spiritual" means, it is vastly important to realize it, for then we can see the difference between the true and false spiritually. There is then no reason whatever why the true spiritually should renounce the aid of material instruments, "sensible signs," symbols which we can see with our eyes and touch with our hands; in short, sacraments.

What would really be unspiritual would be that the action of the sacraments should be conceived in a sub-personal way. When people speak of "sacramental grace" they sometimes betray forgetfulness of the fact that grace is "a gracious personal relationship." That is a real danger. That would really be unspirituality.

D. M. Baillie, *The Theology of the Sacrament* (Scribners)

* * *

Jesus specifically condemned the "vain repetitions" of the Gentiles, the idea that a man is heard for his much speaking, or his much kneeling. Filibustering in prayer will get you nowhere. God has heard a lot of oratory, perhaps a little "good" oratory. Words as such do not impress him. He listens to the cry of the heart—a real concern for another's need or one's own. If your need or your neighbor's is real, a short, sharp cry is better than a long wail.

David Wesley Soper, *"You Have Met Christ* (Westminster)

* * *

The only Christian worthy of the name is not the man who attempts the difficult, conformity to "our society," but the man who attempts the impossible, conformity to God's will, always other than, and better than, our own, and in some degree accomplishes it—with more than human strength.

David Wesley Soper

* * *

The effort to separate what is true from what is false is our lifework. The need for it never ends . . . . If we seek things more than truths, we are thing-minded and therefore less than men. If we are truth-minded, we will seek truths more than things. For what we seek, we find, and what we seek, we are, as Jesus put it in Matt. 7:7-8).

David Wesley Soper

One Sunday I was asked to take an evening anniversary service in a tiny village. I arrived a few moments before the service was to start. It was dark, and very few lights seemed to be on. I asked a man whom I met where the church was, and he said, "I will take you to it." He led me down the street to a long, low building, the exterior of which was in darkness. The church actually was not quite completed, and as yet no lights had been installed outside. Unaware of this at the time, I thought to myself, "What a dismal place! No lights outside, and there'll probably be nobody inside!" As the man opened the door, however, light from the inside blazed out into the darkness. The church was filled with people waiting for me, and I found them to be friendly and happy. How often the doorway of death looks gloomy and dark from where we stand in this earthly life, hampered by our human limitations. Still, if these words of Jesus (John 11:25) are true, and we believe they are, then what a change will await our loved ones as they are led through the darkened doorway of death to the light, the happiness, the loving friends within.

J. Robert Watt, *Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled* (Abingdon)

* * *

There are a lot of people in this world who are willing to live decent, ordinary good lives. But Jesus did not ask us to do that. He said, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees." You have not found the greatest adventure in the world unless you have discovered that prayer has made you see visions and dream dreams and has left you forever unable to be content so long as there remains in the world anything which by its presence there denies this revelation of God which we find in the life and teaching of Christ.

Allan Knight Chalmbers, *Adventuring in Prayer* (Westminster)

* * *

In E. A. Robinson's, "The Glory of the Nightingales," one character tries to comfort a man in despair by telling him that he is greatly admired by a third person. But the man only answers: "He does not know that I'm not a good man. He knows too many others who are worse. He has no knowledge of the lights I had and could not follow."

Fred E. Luchs

FIRST COMMUNION

ey said: with God upon your tongue,
e world will change.
d though I was so light and young
seemed not strange.

at bread could be His earthly lair
d wine His Blood:
me was but His heavenly flair
r giving food.

, never was there such a shine
land or sea
in that thrall of His and mine
ernity!

ver a child more joyous felt
at life was true;
t when my all of being knelt
e Source unto —

sudden pierced my love of Love,
loath to cheat
e Word made flesh and all thereof,
wept to eat.

ey said: though you are light and young
will not change.
d there with God upon my tongue,
e world grew strange.

Margaret McGovern
Atlantic Monthly July, 1951

* * *

As tools become rusty, so does the mind; garden uncared for soon becomes smothed in weeds; a talent neglected withers d dies. Ethel R. Rage

* * *

Great minds discuss ideas, average minds scuss events, small minds discuss people.

* * *

Sometimes it is only a change of viewint that is needed to convert a seeming- tiresome duty into an interesting opportnity. Alberta Flanders

* * *

Suppose the membership of your church ere limited to one hundred people—would u be in or out? Suppose you had to run r church affiliation as a candidate runs r political office — would you win or lose e election? Suppose the membership were od for one year — would you be re-elected? ppose every other member had just your al and anxiety for the progress of the ngdom — would the church advance, or out of business? Suppose all dues had be paid in advance and regular attendce were demanded, except in case of illss — would you be retained indefinitely the roll? I am very much afraid that if some new type of pressure gauge could register our enthusiasm for the Church, and that could be compared with our interest in home or business or society or nation, the difference would be lamentably great.

Herbert Booth Smith

* * *

An old preacher used to pray that in his preaching he might remember both "the modernity of the time and the eternity of the truth." Loyalty includes the two duties. We shall not miss the second. Our deep need drives us to it. But we need also to discern clearly the issue which the Church, and indeed the whole world confronts today.

Robert E. Speer

* * *

If you would have life taste good — if you would give tang to life, you would feed upon the Bread of Life. This . . . is what Jesus meant when He said at the conclusion of the Beatitudes, "Ye are the salt of the earth." Sprinkle these from the salt celler of the Gospel over life and the flattest spinach of every day existence has flavor and zest.

Murray A. Cayley

* * *

If Christ should come back to earth today and be confronted with the present suffering and breakdown, what would He practically do?

I am very sure He would not be discouraged. One of the most striking and amazing things in His earthly life was His supreme and never-doubting confidence in God and in the sure triumph of the fundamental principles which He taught. Even at the end, when all His life-work seemed about to crash around Him, when He found Himself profoundly misunderstood by His closest disciples and actually betrayed by one of His loved twelve, even at the end, we hear His ringing words, "Be of good cheer — I have over come the world." Amazing self-confidence!

Were Christ to walk the earth again today, He would bring a buoyancy of hope and enthusiasm and sure confidence in the triumph of His cause that would move mountains. Through our own unshakable, conquering faith and the influence which each of us inescapably radiates, we can inspire and hearten and shape the course of man's beliefs. We can put new hope into the world. If we are true Christians, here is a tremendous service for us to perform.

Francis B. Sayre

* * *

A noted musician visiting in America, was invited by his host to attend Church. He had been invited the preceding Sunday and had

accepted. But when invited the second time, he replied: "I will attend on one condition—that you will take me to hear some one who will dare me to do the impossible." Certain realistic facts of our presentday world do indeed seem to make the following of Jesus impossible. There is only one hope for the world, and that is that men, facing the realistic facts of life, will dare to venture the impossible. Jesus put it this way: "My Kingdom is not of this world."

One generation after another, including our own, has spoiled these words and robbed them of their true meaning by substituting the word *in* for the *of* . . . It never occurred to Jesus that his Kingdom was to be established anywhere but on this earth. And what is more, it must be esablished here! Unless the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord . . . we are ruined! "Are we helping to build the kingdom of *this* world; or do we dare that which today seems impossible — to help build his Kingdom *in* this world!"

Harold B. Kerschner

* * *

There is an enchanting story, called "The Wonderful Window," which tells of a London clerk of other days, called to work in dark and depressing surroundings, who procured a mysterious oriental window, and had it installed high in his office work shop. Through this window he saw no more the sunless streets and the anxious faces so long familiar to his gaze; but he saw instead a city of high towers, or green treetops and great sky-ways. And on the highest tower there was a banner, with a sturdy knight upon it, protecting the city from the destructive forces that threatened to undermine it. This wonderful window put a halo of glory about his life. As he added up the long columns of figures and tried to make them balance—as he added up the facts of life and tried to make them balance — he came to feel that he was working with that knight upon the tower. His work was to help the knight keep the city beautiful and happy and spiritually strong. He was living *in* this world, but he was not a part *of* it. Hemmed in by forces and influences that make up the kingdoms of this world, his soul was free — he was helping to build the city of God among men.

Harold B. Kerscher

* * *

The Cross, which is crucial in our faith, is, with all its mystery an evidence of God's plan to save us within the framework of humanity. The humblest believer, who takes up his cross, is part of that great cosmic scheme of filling up that which is left behind of the sufferings of Christ. Judas and Jesus came through the same family pedigree — "the son of Adam, the son of God." What's right with the world is that, while we work out our salvation with fear and trembling, it is God who worketh in us both to will and to do His good pleasure.

William P. Lemon

* * *

Religion is not something you have. Religion is something that has you. And our children, in today and for tomorrow, must learn well the Christian values to be apprehended and preserved. Our program is not only for today, for a world in the midst of immediate turmoil; it reaches out far into the future, farther than any man can see. What kind of a world will it be tomorrow? No man would venture to guess. But it will be like our own in certain respects: there will be similar problems; people will be selfish; the young will rebel against authority; and there will be pain and heartache and need of sympathy . . . tomorrow will be so much like today that we will need to train our children now in the best we know of Christian truth and character.

Rex Stowers Clements

* * *

Christ is the person of the missionary himself, however quietly and unobtrusively He is offered, has singular attraction and persuasion for multitudes who thus discover their Lord and yield to Him. He was an Oberlin man who in China encountered a virulent and wide-spread disease that was epidemic in its proportions and for whose destruction there was no competent antisepsis. There seemed no way to counter it but to gather a vial of the germs — they were called "flukes" — journey to America . . . and try for a serum which might prove effectivce. But when he arrived at San Francisco the customs officers would not permit them to enter. He might come in but not with that tube of flukes! Argument that he would exercise the greatest care to see that they got to Baltimore without diffusion and danger to this country could not overcome the caution of the officers. So this heroic little man returned to his stateroom upended the vial and swallowed the entire contents, then boarded the swiftest train for Johns Hopkins and the hospital. Of course, he was a terribly sick man, and for a number of weeks his life was despaired of. But God has a way of affirming such devotion, and his physical resistance had the quality of the ideal and the need he was serving. In the end he fully recovered, and

ade the first serum from his own blood! is incident has always moved me deeply, it did his Chinese friends, both because its intrinsic worth and because it is a r sample of the selflessness of missions erywhere. Paul C. Johnston

* * *

I used to think the meanest man in the rld was Charles Dicken's character, ueers. Squeers took Nicholas Nickleby to inn and bought a glass of milk, drank lf of it himself, then filled the glass with ter and handed it to Nicholas with the mark, "Here's richness!" But be it said the eternal credit of Mr. Squeers — he ver thrashed Nicholas for not getting t on that diet! For anyone to say, "Give a better program and we'll give you more pport," is for Squeers to say to Nicholas, tart putting on weight and I'll give you re to eat, but if you can't fatten up on is diet of watered skim milk, how can you pect me to trust you with beefsteak and butter?" Paul Calvin Payne

* * *

Most people, inside or outside the Church, think of its influence almost entirely in terms of spiritual helpfulness to individuals. They assume that its significance for the life of nations is negligible. There is strong evidence to precisely the opposite conclusion. Henry P. Van Dusen

Books For Pulpit Preaching

(Continued from page 2)

days and circumstances. (Harper, 128 pp., $2.)

A Comprehensive Program of Church Music by Federal Lee Whittlesey offers practical help in the problems encountered in organizing, training and using a multiple-choir system, and stresses both the religious educational values of church choirs and the spiritual side of the ministry of music. (Westminster, 215 pp., $3.95.)

THANKSGIVING DAY PRAYERS

Most gracious God, who hast made us wards of thy bounty, and trusted us with e use of thy gifts: we lift up our hearts thanksgiving for the manifold tokens of y surrounding love. We thank thee for e, and the joy of it; for health and all e powers with which thou hast endowed ; for the wondrous world about us; for e world within, and every gleam of life ich turns our minds toward thee; for the re of friends and kindred, and their be- f in us; for the way over which we have me, and all that has been good in it; for e way that lies untrodden before us, and r chance to make it the way of peace and ghteousness; for thy companionship all e way, and our assurance that thou wilt lp us to guide our steps aright. For all at thou art to us, and all that we may be thee, we give thanks unto thee, the Au- or of goodness, and bless thy Name for y mercies which endure unto all genera- ns. Amen.

—Morgan Phelps Noyes.

* * *

Thou art better to the worst of us than e best of us deserve. Help us to realize w good a thing it is to bear pain and ariness for Thee — like a keen knife arpened down to the handle. Teach us to fair, fair in the distribution of what is, er all, not our own. May our faith get o our hands and feet, into our tongues d tempers, so that the world may see how warm is our solicitude for thy good name. May the one who is deliberately doing wrong have our pity and rebuke, if it may be, our sympathy and help. May we pass in well-used tools, that we may know how to use the new set when we get them— our own, and as well fitted to their use as were these we lay aside. May we be stern, stringent, remorseless, toward our own sins and wrong-doings. Show us where the evil in us is, where the wild beasts of passion lurk. May we set our faces steadfastly to go to our Jerusalem. May we have an abundant entrance on that great Thanksgiving Day. We thank Thee for past mercies and present blessings and future hopes, so bright, so winsome, so dazzling. And they are sure to come true. By thy forgiveness we hope to live lives needing less forgiveness — lives that shall ring with victory. May we give ourselves to Thee in a consecration so complete that we shall be fitted for the rest of our lives here and for the never-ending eons of our true life there. Bless everyone who is doing even one self-sacrificing piece of work for Thee. Win to Thyself from our glad and spontaneous hearts new recognition of thy goodness, for Thou art good. Amen.

—Maltbie Davenport Babcock

* * *

O Lord of heaven and earth, who led our fathers forth, making them to go from one

kingdom to another people; we yield thee hearty thanks for all thou didst for them and art doing for the land to which they came. May we always remember them in thee, and be grateful to them through thee. We remember that their communion was to eat their bread in exile and their sacrament was to pour out their blood for others. We remember them not only as valiant in fight, but as wise in council; not only as brave warriors, but as far-seeing statesmen and incorruptible patriots. And we give thee thanks for them. And we pray that we may follow their good examples and bequeath to our children a nation worthy of such founders, meet to do thy will, a kingdom subject completely to thee and to thy Christ. Amen. —Theodore Parker

* * *

O God of love, we yield thee thanks for whatsoever thou hast given us richly to enjoy: for health and vigor, for the love and care of home, for joys of friendships, and for every good gift of happiness and strength. We praise thee for all thy servants who by their example and encouragement have helped us on our way, and for every vision of thyself which thou hast even given us in sacrament and prayer; and we humbly beseech thee that all these thy benefits we may use to thy service and to the glory of thy holy name; through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord. Amen.

RALPH W. SOCKMAN
BINNEY SIMPSON BLACK
WESLEY P. FORD

ediscovering America

RALPH W. SOCKMAN, Christ Church, New York, New York

How did Columbus come to discover nerica? We remember that he wanted to d a new route to India. The old road from rope to India by way of the Middle East d been closed by the Turks. Hence Co-nbus sailed west from Spain hoping to d another passage to the wealth of the ient.

Let us follow in the trail of Columbus and liscover America. And there is one sen-ce which dominates my thought as I pic-e America. It is the word of Jesus, re-ded by Luke 12:48: "Every one to whom ch is given, of him will much be re-red."

I

At the Thanksgiving season we need, first all, to reappraise our inheritance. What s made possible this mighty growth of nerica? Who placed this new nation be-een two vast oceans which protected her om serious invasion during her young and owing years? who gave this wilderness the h soil to bring forth its bountiful har-sts? Who located the rivers of this conti-nt, like the St. Lawrence, the Mississippi, e Columbia, so that they formed highways its heart and then furnished horsepower its factories? Who filled the reservoirs oil beneath its rocks and stored the coal thin its hills? Certainly God has been od to America.

Oh, to be sure, we can counter all this th the old and hackneyed joke about the eacher who saw a farmer cultivating his rden and piously said to him, "That is a autiful garden which God and you have de." And the farmer replied, "Yes, but u should have seen it when God had it ne!" Truly it has been human hands ich have brought God's gifts into use and tivation.

But whence came the people who did it? om lands beyond this. And when did they ne? Most of them in days before ours. e can be proud of our ancestors, but re-mber, we did not produce them. We who oy the blessings of America did not cre-its material and human resources. God s been very good to us.

In Edinburgh our guide took us past a stately brownstone house, and told us that it was the birthplace of Alexander Graham Bell, the inventor of the telephone. The guide smilingly said: "We know that he went overseas, but just remember that we gave him to you." Bell's father moved from Scotland to Canada and the lad so fell in love with a certain mountaintop on Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, that he asked to be buried there. But his work was largely done in the United States, whose government protected his patents and whose industrial organization gave scope to his genius. Hence on his grave atop that hill in Nova Scotia is this epitaph:

> "Alexander Graham Bell
> Inventor — Teacher
> Born Edinburgh, March 3, 1847
> Died a citizen of the U.S.A. 1922."

Bell's career was so full of achievements that he might have listed many of his fabulous inventions and honors. But the fact that he singled out that he was "a citizen of the U.S.A." was I suppose, because he was so grateful to the nation which safeguarded his patents, developed his products and rewarded his abilities.

It is citizens like Alexander Graham Bell who have helped to make rich and free countries like the United States and Canada. Most of our citizens at this Thanksgiving season should be humbly grateful as they sing with Katherine Lee Bates:

> "O beautiful for spacious skies
> For amber waves of grain,
> For purple mountain majesties
> Above the fruited plain."

When we reappraise our inheritance, both in nature and human nature, we must feel that God has been very good to America. And remember Our Lord's words, "Every one to whom much is given, of him will much be required."

II

Secondly, at this season, we should *re-study our American principles.* About twenty years ago Aldous Huxley in his book *Ends and Means,* seemed to assume that there is general agreement as to what are

the good ends of life. He said: "From Isaiah to Karl Marx, the prophets have spoken with one voice. In the Golden Age to which they look forward there will be liberty, peace, justice, and brotherly love."

And so it seems if we just listen to the sound of words without stopping to think. While it is true that liberty, peace, justice and brotherly love are the goals which all men say they seek, do all men have the same things in mind when they use those four great words? Most decidedly they do not.

Take liberty, for example. The cry for liberty may be the plea of a poor victim to be delivered from cruel oppression. Or it may be merely the petulant plaint of a pampered child for more indulgence. It may be the longing of the underprivileged for a place in the sun, or it may be the desire of the selfish to do as they please. Does liberty mean the same when spoken in the Kremlin as in our Congress? Saint Paul bade his readers to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has set you free." As citizens of a so-called Christian nation, we are required to study our concept of liberty in the light of Christ's teaching and work.

Or consider peace. When we profess to want peace, what do we have in mind? Is it the drowsy contentment of those who are physically and financially comfortable and do not want the status quo disturbed? Or is it the stability which is founded on justice? India is not at war but would we call it peace if we lived in an Indian village where the cow slept beside us in the same room and children were almost too weak to cry? Would we have understood the peace Jesus talked about at his Last Supper with the cross facing him on the morrow, when he said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you."? When we talk of peace, it behooves us to think what we mean.

Or how about justice, which is another of the four great goals Huxley said all men seek? Oliver Goldsmith once defined justice as "that virtue which impels us to give every person what is his due." But how diverse are the ideas of what is justly due to persons in concrete situations. The mother and the judge may likely have very different ideas of what would be just to the boy standing as a prisoner at the bar of the court. The shiftless tramp mutters, "The world owes me a living." But he means something different from the thrifty and hard-working woman who is reaching the age of unemployability without adequate savings for the future. When we say that we want justice to prevail, we should stop to think what Jesus would call just.

Or turn to the last of the four goals which Aldous Huxley said all men seek — brotherly love. We are ever talking at public dinners and in pulpits and political campaigns about the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man. But one of the seminery students I teach has a parish among the Puerto Ricans in East Harlem here in New York. He says it is little use for him to talk to his youth about God as a Father, for the word father has no beloved meaning to them. Some of them do not know who their real father is. To some of them the only gratitude they have to the man they call father is that he helps to keep them out of the reach of the police, when they commit some depredation. That student's experience made me realize how smug and complacent some of us can become in our conventional churches when we talk about the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.

Yes, we can fill the air with noble words like liberty and peace, and justice and brotherly love, but how much do we think about them and take them to heart? At times I fear some of us who preach deserve the title which a politician once hurled at a rival political orator when he called him, "The Wizard of Ooze." God forbid that we who preach the gospel of Christ should become "wizards of ooze."

In Maxwell Anderson's play, *Valley Forge*, he pictures Washington helping his tattered and freezing soldiers in the heartbreaking task of burying their fallen comrades. Then Washington turns to his men and says, "This liberty will look easy by and by when nobody dies to get it."

At this Thanksgiving time let us restudy the great principles which America boasts. And remember our Lord's words, "Every one to whom much is given, of him will much be required."

III

Having looked at our inheritance and our basic principles, can we do less than take a third step? And that is to *rededicate our lives*.

J. B. Priestly once said that our behavior toward our country should be like that of a loving wife toward her husband. He said "She will do anything for her husband except stop criticizing him and trying to improve him." A devoted wife's criticism of and efforts to improve, her husband are born out of her love for him.

So is it with a citiezn's love of country. It may sometimes lead him to criticize some programs and policies. But his motive must always be in line with the purposes set forth in the preamble of our Constitution

is good for us to refresh our memories of s preamble. Here it is: "We, the people the United States, in order to form a more rfect Union, establish justice, insure do-stic tranquility, provide for the common fense, promote the general welfare, and se-re the blessings of liberty to ourselves and r posterity, do ordain and establish this nstitution."

Note the clause about securing the bless-gs of liberty comes after the pledges to omote the unity, justice, tranquility and neral welfare. But we are so prone to put erty first, stressing our rights and priv-ges before our obligations and responsi-ities. I wonder if we are overlooking a sic fact, which is that people need some-ng to belong to even more than something be freed from.

There is an upsurge of nationalism all er the world. We see it in India, Pakistan, rocco, Indonesia and many other lands. t this is a sign that people need loyalties en more than liberties. When I was in dia three years ago, I was convinced that many aspects of living things were not as ooth and comfortable as they were under itish rule. The new nation of India was king some mistakes. But as one of the dians said, "They are our own mistakes." e intense loyalty of the people of India their new nation is giving zest to their ing even under conditions which would em to us almost intolerable.

If nationalism and communism can inspire ch loyalty, cannot Christianity do as uch?

Esther Forbes in her *Life and Times of ul Revere,* told us that after the battle of rktown, which was the final battle of our ar for Independence, the soldiers of our evolutionary Army were left idle. They ew restless. Then they grew rebellious. nd then for the first time the word "sol-ering" came into our language as a word of unpleasant meaning. Did you ever think of the difference in connotation between the word "soldier" and the word "soldiering"? The word soldier in wartime suggests heroism, struggle, sacrifice. The word "soldiering" in peacetime implies just the opposite, idleness, evasion of responsibility, killing time — "soldiering on the job." One trouble of our times is that we Americans who become good enough soldiers in wartime to win victories, so often turn to soldiering on some of our civic duties after the wars are over and thus threaten to lose the peace.

God has been very good to America. He guided Columbus to our shores, for as George Santayana said, Columbus had no chart "save one that faith deciphered in the skies." This land was discovered by faith.

It was also faith in God which sustained the Pilgrim Fathers through that first bleak winter when their food ration at one time was reduced to four grains of corn per person per meal.

America has grown by faith. Dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal, it has blended all races and nationalities into a nation whose flag we teach our children to salute as that of "one nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

When we think of the hundreds of thousands of refugees living in camps with no nation to call their own; when we think of the thousands slain in Hungary struggling for freedom; when we think of the dark-skinned millions in South Africa downtrodden and disfranchised — we are humbly grateful to Almighty God who has cast our lot in this western world where there is room enough and food enough to enjoy the rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

But remember the words of Our Lord, "Every one to whom much is given, of him much will be required."

od of the Harvest

BINNEY SIMPSON BLACK, Chalmers Presbyterian Church, Uxbridge, Ontario

ou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness. — Psalm 65:11
y mouth shall speak the praise of the Lord.—Psalm 145:24

At this season of the year Christian peo-e should give time to serious reflection d to such scripture reading as will in-ease their sense of gratitude. For grati-de, to be genuine, spontaneous, and heart-t, must spring from a real experience of d. The psalmist said, "My mouth shall eak the praise of the Lord." Such a vow n only spring from a certain temper of the mind. We cannot do it with constancy and joy unless we have a serious, thoughtful spirit that is intimate with spiritual subjects, acquainted with God and Christ. Praise is the offspring of meditation, and if we desire to be adept in the holy art of thanksgiving we must have a personal knowledge of God through his Son Jesus Christ.

When in the world, our head and heart must find employment there. But the great and loving God must not be a stranger to us. Our effort should constantly be to know more of Him, to become more deeply sensible of His favors and to love His perfections. Meditation gives birth to praise. The more we think about the God of the Bible and see our own unworthiness in the light of Christ, the more we enter into that state of mind which favors the offering of praise. The thoughtless cannot be thankful, and the unthankful know nothing of the psalmist's vow to "speak the praise of the Lord."

Thanksgiving season, like the Lenten season, should find us with our Bibles in our hands. For it is in the Bible that God speaks to us. The Bible both tells us what men have to say about God and what God has to say to men. It contains God's message to the world and records what God has said and done. God still speaks to those who read His Word. Those sacred pages awaken our faith, our obedience, our gratitude and love, for we are brought face to face with the lovingkindness of the Lord and His loving purposes for the children of men.

I

Many subjects of praise occupy our minds. We are grateful for our country and the blessing of our democratic institutions, free schools, freedom of speech, freedom of worship, Christian homes, the Christian Church, material and spiritual blessings, and the great, inspiring and steadying thought that the God of our fathers is shaping the history of the world, though often our eyes are too dim to see it.

"This is my Father's world,
O let me ne'er forget
That though the wrong seem
oft so strong,
God is the Ruler yet"

Consider the being and character of God, as revealed by Jesus. The more we contemplate the more we shall find that all the perfections which shine in the constellation of the Divine name excite our wonder, love and praise.

Consider especially the person of Jesus as we say, "Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!" It stirs us to observe how everything in the Bible leads up to Christ. He is the center and soul of the New Testament, and because of its glowing picture of Christ that New Testament is the most precious possession humanity has. And Christ is God in the life of man. He is indispensable for your life and mine. He alone is worthy of our praise, "My Lord and my God." He alone is "the way, and the truth, and the life," for this twentieth century as well as for the first century. When we look long enough at Him and listen intently to what He says, we feel sure there is hope for the world only when man listens to His words and falls in adoration at His feet. Every thought of Christ should call forth grateful and adoring celebration. God "has highly exalted" Him and given Him "the name which is above every name." O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

"Let earth's wide circle round
In joyful notes resound,
May Jesus Christ be praised!
Let earth and sea and sky,
From depth to height, reply,
May Jesus Christ be praised!"

II

But looking at all our creaturely comforts which are ever visible to the eye of sense we thank the great Giver for the harvest. The earliest celebrations were concerned almost wholly with the bounty of the harvest. In the book of Exodus we read of "the feast of harvest, of the first fruits of your labor of what you sow in the field . . . the first of the fruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the Lord your God."

The modern observance of the day dates from the Pilgrim Fathers. In the summer of 1621, in the New England States where the Pilgrims had settled, there was a very lean harvest, but Governor Bradford decreed a day of thanksgiving and rejoicing after the scanty crop had been gathered in. In time all the New England colonies followed his example. In the United States the President proclaims the day every year; in Canada it is proclaimed annually by the Governor-General.

Let us thank God for the harvest. Our eyes are filled so constantly with the good things of the natural world that familiarity may beget a certain indifference and carelessness. As we gaze upon the products of the garden and the field, it is so easy to recognize the part man plays and overlook what men owe to God. We are too ready to banish the Creator for His own creation and close our eyes to the ever-recurring miracles we owe to Him. The Old Testament writers have much to teach us in regard to this. They would remind us that the verdure of the trees, the beautiful family of the flowers, the birds, the animals, the fields of golden grain and corn, are all from God's wondrous mind. His power and skill contrived them all. In a deeply arresting

ıtement Genesis says that "out of the ound the Lord God made to grow every ee that is pleasant to the sight and good r food." Beauty and utility were divinely ıked.

III

The North American continent is a land peace and plenty. If there is a local short- e, elsewhere there is a surplus. Have we riously considered the source of our good rtune? Do we credit it to economic fac- rs and a complex system of distribution d trade? Do we in this way leave out God? ehind everything man may do lies the fact growth, the mystery of all our sowing d reaping. Man plants and waters and epares the soil, but God gives the increase. e is the supreme factor, and without His lp in supplying those conditions which man cannot provide, the seed would rot in the ground; instead of abundant crops and fields white to the harvest there would be barrenness and despair. "His bountiful care no tongue can recite!"

An annual day of Thanksgiving in a Christian country recognizes a Higher Power than the power of man.

"Back of the loaf is the snowy flour,
And back of the flour the mill;
And back of the mill the wheat and the shower,
The sun and the Father's will."

As we "raise the song of harvest home," let us be thankful not only in word or speech but in deed and in truth. "O give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; His steadfast love endures forever!"

ities Which You Did Not Build

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The "do it yourself" craze has made us oud for doing what would have been be- re breakfast chores for our grandparents. rmed with a kit of tools we march forth paint the bedroom, often with the furni- re included at no extra cost; to patch the of; fix the faucet; or trim the trees. Then te the little lad who stuck in his thumb d pulled out a plum, each says, "What great boy am I." Let's not forget that ıile we paint the rooms and patch the ofs our grandfathers built their houses. here we proudly fix the faucets our an- stors dug the wells. Where we trim the ees those before us cleared the land and anted the trees.

While conceitedly displaying a few blis- rs for our "do it yourself" ability we be- me unduly proud and soon think we real- did do it. For one to put a washer in a ucet is often to boast as though he were sponsible for the source of the water! ctually, our little fix-it chores are as ild's play. So much has been done for us at we are like children brought down- airs on Christmas morning to find a load- Christmas tree waiting to be harvested.

I

We think of the Israelites as going up om Egypt to settle in the desert country t that is not a true picture. They went up a land flowing with milk and honey but eady possessed. Ancient tribes had set- d there and when the Israelites arrived, ies were built, wells were dug and vine- rds planted. So Deuteronomy says: "When e Lord your God brings you into the land which he swore to give you, with cities which you did not build, the houses full of all good things which you did not fill, and cisterns hewn out which you did not hew, and vine- yards and olive trees which you did not plant." A little later the same writer says, "The Lord is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks, of water, of fountains and springs, a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees, pomegranates . . . " And is it not in the same proportion that God has blessed us. We, too, live in cities which we did not build.

Jesus expressed this same idea when re- minding his disciples that both sower and reaper would rejoice together. "One sows and another reaps. I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor; others have labored and you have entered into their la- bor." That was true in ancient Israel. it was true in Jesus day and it is true in 1957. In spite of our current crop of Little Miss Fix- its, not one of us has created for himself the things which really matter and upon which life is most dependent. Rather, we are the inheritors of cities we did not build.

Someone is already saying, "But in Ameri- ca it is different; our forefathers did build cities here." True, men built the cities, but they did not create that of which the cities were built. The fertile valleys were here, the mountains were full of ore, the rivers were flowing in currents that made for power. That which has made it possible for Ameri- ca to rise to a high economic standard in comfortable isolation was here as the gift of God.

But we go further to claim that the genius of America is not the product of its natural resources. The true stature of our American heritage has roots in the vital faith in God which led the first settlers to our shores. A month before the *Mayflower* landed at Plymouth in the fury of a New England winter, the passengers drew up the "Mayflower Compact" stating their purpose and intent. Hear its opening sentences: "In the name of God, Amen. We . . . having undertaken for the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith . . . a voyage to plant the first colony . . ." Here is written first by pen, but later by blood and sacrifice, the faith upon which a nation was to be built. This was not an undertaking toward a higher economic standard; it was not a quest for freedom from suffering; it was not a desire for bigger business interests; it was rather a venture in the name of God for the advancement of the Christian faith!

Little did these realize the price they would pay for their venture. The Mayflower carried 102 passengers. During the first winter, 51 of their number died of undernourishment, exposure and disease. At one time there were only seven adults who were able to nurse the sick and hunt for food. Our Thanksgiving comes out of the experience of the second winter when, because of the harvest, the 51 survivors met to praise God. Now they could march through the corn fields singing, "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein."

I have often thought of the contribution of that first winter to America. What if these pilgrims had found cities and warmth and plenty? Would they soon have forgotten God? Would they have abandoned their faith if they had found a ready-made community in which they did not need it? Well, they found nothing ready-made. They did it themselves, and if they could not do it soon enough, they died! But in the process God, who was a very present help, was in all that they did.

II

These settlers left the old world because their idea of God had grown. Their faith in God could no longer be confined to the religious mold into which God had been neatly poured. They had become exiles for insisting that they must obey God, rather than men. And that obedience became a matter of conduct not only in church, but in business, in the affairs of government and in everything they did. Because they were unwilling to confine God to religion, the exiles became pilgrims to America where they boldly incorporated God into every enterprise.

Only as we understand the full impact of this new kind of community do we appreciate the uniqueness of our heritage. The goal of the Mayflower Compact, "For the glory of God, and the advancement of the Christian faith," was not a church centered objective. Here was the purpose of the community and corporate life. It was the goal of government and industry. May I illustrate by suggesting that if in the very young days of the American colony there had been a Woolworth Store established or a service station, or a daily newspaper, the primary purpose of each would not have been to sell gadgets and report dividends, but its basic motivation would have been "for the glory of God and the advancement of the Christian faith."

We live now in that new kind of society which resulted from the sacrificial devotion even unto death to the high Christian ideal of God and His righteousness in all human affairs. And we have lived in this community so long we take it for granted, and by its God-given abundance we have become so rich that we seem not to need the God our fathers could not do without. So proud are we of our "do it yourself" ability that we think we did it ourselves.

This condition is not new. After reminding the Israelites of the cities they did not build, the author of Deuteronomy says, "Beware lest you say in your heart: My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth." This warning which is oft repeated through the Old Testament speaks directly to our "do it yourself" culture.

Sin has been called by many names, one of which is ingratitude. Some walk humbly in the presence of many blessings accepting life itself as the gift which it is. In contrast some come seizing life by right and claiming all its prizes for themselves simply because they happen to be alive. And life accepted as a gift or taken by seizure is the difference between big men and little men.

III

What then can we say concerning the citizenship responsibilities of we American heirs of the ages living in cities which we did not build, and exalted by the sacrificial faith of those who said, "We must obey God rather than men," ours is a two-fold responsibility. First, to be as loyal to God as were those who made possible our heritage. This richness which is our privilege is the direct result of the faith of men who believed it was more important to worship God than to obey emperors or government decrees

d, who believed that the advancement of Christian faith was more important than ysical security or economic gain. It fol- ys that to the degree by which we neglect become indifferent to the high privilege worship, and to the degree by which we l to put the advancement of the Chris- n faith ahead of personal gain, we are ving to our sons and grandsons, "You satisfied with a lesser heritage than that ich our fathers left for us." Rightly un- rstood our heritage calls us to the sacri- ial stewardship of time and money. Fail- at this point we walk unworthily over graves of our founders!

One note needs emphasis. Many church mbers take lightly their stewardship ob- ations and we assume only that they are good church members. But further, they not good citizens! America was born in dication to the advancement of the Chris- n faith. For persons now to accept the t of citizenship here, and remain un- lling to give their dollars through the urch which advances that faith, is to be patriotic and un-American.

The second demand upon us is that we shall be humbly grateful! This sounds trite, but it is not meant to be. We live in cities that we did not build. Our kind of society was plowed into our soil by the blood and sacrifice of thousands whom we cannot know. To forget that is to be blind to the hand of God in history, and is to ignore the fact that Jesus had a high commitment from those who gave us life.

Our "do it yourself" slogan is woefully inadequate. No nation can long endure puffed up by the pride of its own accomplishments. Let Christians take the lead in humbly acknowledging the hand of God in our history until we praise Him because we were bought with a price! And let us remember that it was not the price of prosperity but the price of hunger and cold and death by men who said, "For the glory of God, and the advancement of the Christian faith."

"Lord God of hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!"

We, too, live in cities which we did not build and reap abundantly where we did not labor. Let us praise God, lest we forget!